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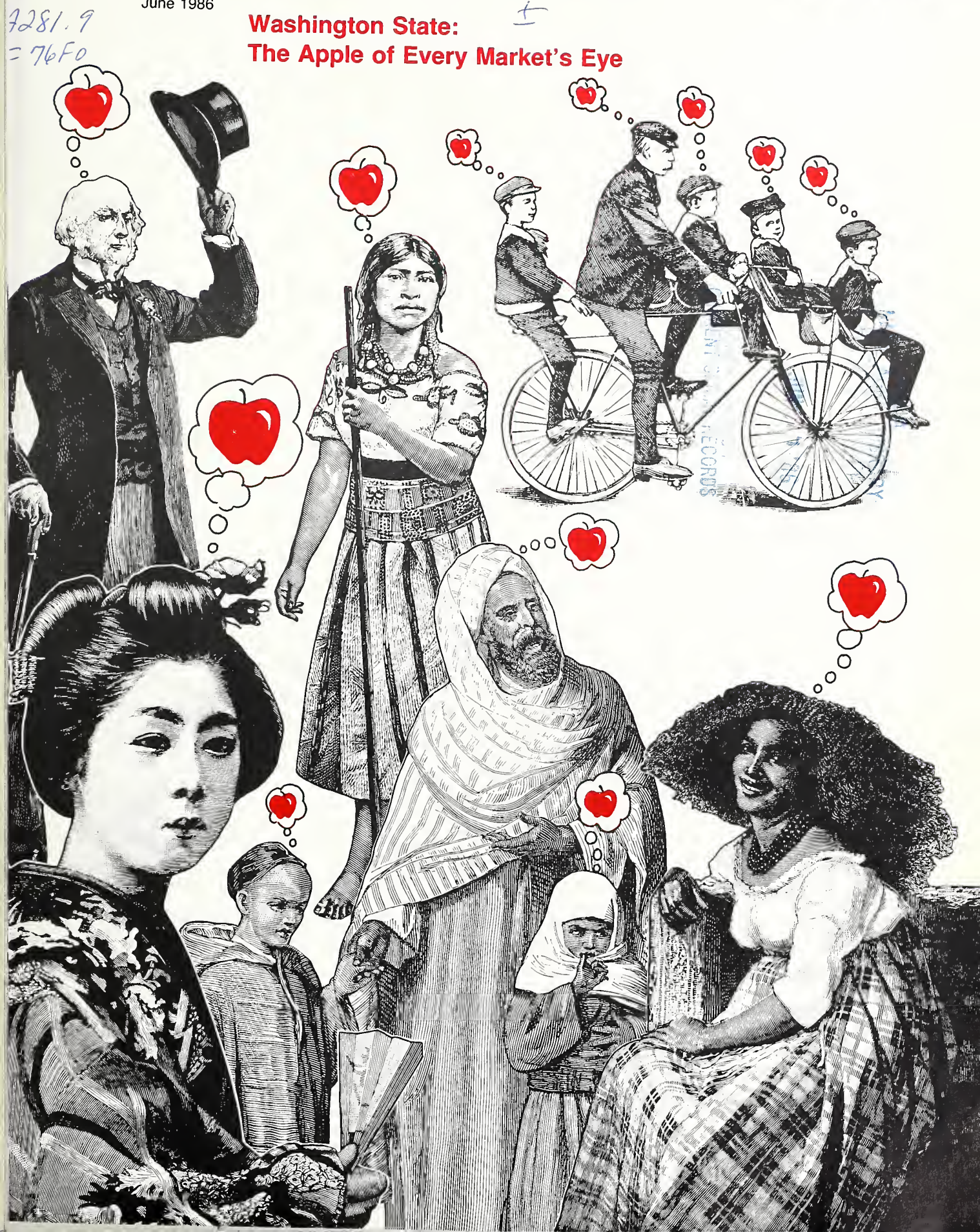




June 1986

# Foreign Agriculture

Washington State:  
The Apple of Every Market's Eye





# Marketing News

## MEF Hires Representative for Latin America/Caribbean

The **U.S. Meat Export Federation (MEF)** recently appointed Gerardo Perez as its representative in the Latin American/Caribbean region. Perez will develop markets for U.S. red meats and coordinate the Federation's activities in Central and South America and the Caribbean. He will work out of the U.S. agricultural trade office in Caracas, Venezuela.

One of Perez's first tasks will be to develop creative marketing programs in the Caribbean to promote less expensive cuts of U.S. meat, according to MEF's Vice President of Marketing/Administration Don Hellbusch. Hellbusch said tourism in the Caribbean has been declining, and consequently some hotels have become concerned with costs of importing high-quality cuts of meat. To contact Perez, write U.S. Agricultural Trade Office, Torre C-Piso 19, Centro Plaza, Los Palos Grandes, Caracas, Venezuela. Telex 29119 USATO VC.

## U.S. Meat Supplier Directories Available

**MEF** recently published two U.S. meat supplier directories for distribution in Japan, Southeast Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Latin American/Caribbean region. The *U.S. Meat Export Federation Member Suppliers* directory includes only MEF member-companies. It devotes a full page to each member, including the company's logo, listing of products available, contact names and other special information about the company.

The *Directory of U.S. Meat Suppliers* includes nearly 200 U.S. meatpackers, purveyors, processors and exporters involved in exporting. MEF members are highlighted in this directory, which also lists the types of products available from each company. The directory contains a special section listing firms involved in Islamic (Halal) slaughter and Kosher kill.

For a copy of either directory, contact Cindy Senesac, Tel. (303) 339-7151.

## Bread for Breakfast Boosts Sri Lankan Wheat Demand

Sri Lanka's wheat use has increased by over 15 percent since 1983, spurred by increased consumption of bread products at breakfast. These items account for about 65 percent of total flour usage. The increase is partly the result of five years of intensive technical assistance, baking workshops and promotional campaigns sponsored and conducted jointly by **U.S. Wheat Associates** and the Sri Lankan baking industry.

"The convenience of bread is being recognized by this slowly modernizing society; however, bread has been readily available for years," observes Tim Oviatt, U.S. Wheat Associates' regional director for South Asia. "Better quality breads are becoming available, which makes them more attractive to the consumer," he added. Per capita wheat consumption is nearly 80 pounds now. The size of the Sri Lankan market for U.S. wheat in 1985 was about 300,000 metric tons.

## U.S. Holstein Frozen Embryos Exported to Zimbabwe

The first U.S. Holstein embryo export to Zimbabwe was completed last fall by the **Holstein Association USA**. The buyer of this historical shipment of high-tech genetics was the Animal Breeders Company of Harare, Zimbabwe. A report from Zimbabwe confirmed that 90 days after the nonsurgical transfer of 81 embryos to native bovine recipients, 63 percent of the animals were pregnant.

A total of 77 U.S. Holstein and 10 U.S. Jersey frozen embryos were selected for importation. All exceeded minimum pedigree performance requirements for the dam of Holstein embryos. The Zimbabwean firm elected to purchase U.S. embryos instead of bulls because of ease of transportation, less restrictive health requirements and the assumption that animals born from native recipients and raised under local conditions would be more resistant to exotic African diseases.

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# Washington State: The Apple Of Every Market's Eye



**By Robert N. Turner**

*Most Americans take a big, juicy Red Delicious apple for granted. But consumers in many parts of the world have never tried one. That's the job of the Washington State Apple Commission—reaching overseas buyers and promoting the big red (or yellow) apples of Washington State. This month, FOREIGN AGRICULTURE talks with Robert N. Turner, international promotion director of the Washington State Apple Commission about the Commission's market development efforts overseas.*

**Q. Can you give us a brief overview of the Washington State Apple Commission and its goals?**

A. The Washington State Apple Commission is the advertising and promotional arm of the apple industry of the State of Washington. It is completely supported by the State's apple growers through an assessment on every box of apples shipped either domestically or internationally.

Although the Commission was formed in 1937, it wasn't until 1983 that a specific budget and department were created to oversee export activities. Since

Washington apples are exported to 65 countries around the world, it was high time that a separate activity was organized?

**Q. Does the Commission promote both apples and apple products as well?**

A. No. The legislation that established the Commission specifically limited its function to fresh apple promotion rather than apple products or by-products. We routinely receive overseas inquiries for apple juice and sauce, dehydrated apples and apple slices, however, and forward them to the



Washington State Department of Agriculture or directly to producers or manufacturers.

**Q. What is the size of the export market for Washington State apples?**

A. Roughly 20 percent of Washington's fresh apples are exported. That's about 8-8.5 million boxes (42 pounds each), with a value of approximately \$100 million.

**Q. What are your largest and fastest growing markets for Washington apples?**

A. As a region, the Pacific Rim is the biggest market for Washington apples. Taiwan has been the largest single country market since 1979, with imports averaging 2 million boxes a year. It is followed by Hong Kong (1.5 million) and Singapore and Malaysia (about 1.2 million boxes between them.). These last three markets, by the way, are the fastest growing markets.

Until 1985, Saudi Arabia was the second largest market, importing approximately 1.75 million boxes each year. But with the decline in oil revenue and the completion of numerous major projects in Saudi







Arabia, many expatriates have left the country, which apparently has affected imports of Washington State apples there.

Interestingly, New Zealand—which exports apples to the United States—buys all of its imported apples from Washington State. (The two countries have opposite growing seasons.)

**Q. What about Europe and South America?**

A. Western Europe, specifically the United Kingdom, Norway, Finland and Sweden, are also important markets for Washington State.

Central and South America, although traditional markets for Washington apples, have shown a decline in the past few years mostly because of economic and monetary problems there.

**Q. What are some of the activities the Commission conducts?**

A. The promotion and advertising of Washington State apples is an ongoing activity worldwide. I personally travel about 150,000 miles a year to visit various off-shore markets.

In addition, we have merchandisers or public relations and advertising firms working on the promotion of Washington apples in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. The representatives working in the United Kingdom also cover Scandinavia and other European countries.

Much of the work is done in direct contact with the trade—arranging for trade promotions, joint media advertising, participation in trade shows and in-store promotions.

However, we also do a certain amount of consumer advertising each year. For example, for the past two years, brightly colored, giant-sized posters promoting Washington State apples have appeared in the subway stations in Helsinki, Finland. Since a large proportion of the population there uses public transportation, the coverage of these posters reaches a large number of Finnish consumers who, interestingly enough, account for the largest market for Washington State apples in Scandinavia.

**Q. What about in the Middle East?**

A. Advertising is difficult or even nonexistent in the Middle East, so the emphasis there is on trade contacts and in-store or in-souk promotions. While there is a growing number of American-style supermarkets in Saudi Arabia, the vast percentage of fresh fruit is sold in the

souks, which are the traditional marketplaces. The marketing activity plan for Saudi Arabia for this year calls for no fewer than 100 in-store or in-souk promotions for Washington apples.

**Q. What kinds of activities do you run in Pacific Rim countries?**

A. Washington State apples are advertised on television in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, and on billboards in Malaysia. We place additional posters in the Hong Kong subway stations, where they are seen daily by hundreds of thousands of consumers.

Hong Kong had its first "apple ambassador"—a young man in a red apple costume who has become tremendously successful with the younger set. Based on the success in Hong Kong, Taiwan also has an apple ambassador. Since Taiwan also buys Golden Delicious apples, the ambassador has a golden little brother. Both of these characters are used extensively in promotions and public relations.

For the past two years, the reigning Miss Washington has traveled to Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong and Taipei on behalf of the Washington State apple industry. Her arrival in each location kicks off a hotel menu promotion and in-store activities.





In its continuing efforts with the fruit trade of the world, the Washington State Apple Commission has participated in trade exhibits in Paris, Cologne, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taipei, London and Riyadh. As a result of these shows and other direct contact, the Commission maintains a direct mailing list of almost 1,000 names of fruit importers and dealers worldwide.

Finally, we have point-of-sale advertising materials available in 16 languages.

**Q. What are some of the biggest obstacles you face in your work?**

A. There are many. For example, in Japan and Korea, both of whom have substantial domestic production, apples are kept out of the country for fear of an alleged infestation of codling moth. This moth has been under control in Washington for 35 years, so the possibility of exporting it is remote, to say the least. However, this provides a nontariff trade barrier that effectively keeps our apples out of two potentially large markets.

Australia and South Africa restrict the importation of apples from countries and orchards subject to an orchard disease called fire blight which has been shown to not be transmitted through the mature fruit.



Central and South America, as well as other countries around the world, are having economic and monetary difficulties that have greatly reduced imports of apples.

Scandinavian countries have "open dates" at which time the importation of Washington apples is allowed. These dates are fixed by the respective governments in conjunction with local growers and importers.

It is interesting to note that Taiwan remains the No. 1 customer for U.S. apples despite a tariff rate of 67.5 percent of the landed value. The duty rate in Thailand is more than 100 percent.

The market share of Washington State apples in the United Kingdom is very small due to a combination of local production and third-country competition. However, this will be addressed and hopefully corrected through increased advertising and promotion.

In all cases where government intervention is producing a trade barrier, the Apple Commission works closely with other organizations and government agencies, such as the Northwest Horticultural Council, to identify the barriers and to work with U.S. government agencies in attempting to lower or remove these barriers.



**Q. What sort of "homework" do you do before and after promotional activities?**

A. Every country in the world is studied and monitored as a potential new market for Washington apples. When the first container is sold, the Commission's advertising and promotional efforts follow immediately. This is, of course, one of the great benefits of attending international trade shows that are visited by importers and potential importers from all over the world.

**Q. What competition do Washington State apples face?**

A. The competition for export markets is rapidly increasing. Many apple-producing countries have targeted the export markets developed by Washington State for its Red and Golden Delicious apples. Some countries have even shifted production from green apples to red apples in order to emulate Washington's product.

The competition in Western Europe is not only from domestic production, but also from France as a major apple producer. The U.K. market is heavily influenced by both South African and Canadian apples, as well as by French Golden Delicious.

Every apple-producing country in the world sells to Saudi Arabia, where one sees apples from Lebanon, Turkey, Greece, Eastern Europe, China, Japan and Korea.

The most intense competition is developing from the apple growers of Chile. Chile is shipping apples at a much lower price, due to lower production costs, to traditional Washington markets in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore, as well as the Middle East and Europe.

The European Community subsidy for shipping French apples to Southeast Asia was removed only recently. That subsidy still applies to apples exported to the Middle East and Scandinavia.

**Q. What do you do to counter this competition?**

A. Countering the competition is based primarily on the continued "push" to show that the quality of Washington State apples is the finest in the world. Since our apples are always the highest priced apples on the market, it follows that our quality must be absolutely tops both externally (visually) and internally.

The emphasis of Washington State advertising and promotion is that there is value to be obtained for the money spent. We simply cannot compete price-wise with those of almost any other country in the world.

In countries where we enjoy a substantial portion of the market, our efforts are directed toward increasing consumption in general. In some markets, we stress both the nutritional value and the superiority of Washington apples.

Even though per capita consumption in many overseas markets is substantially larger than in the United States, there is considerable room for growth.

**Q. How have things changed in the years you have been working for the Commission? And what do you see ahead in the future?**

A. Since 1979, there has been a considerable increase in the interest in and emphasis on the export market.

Coincidentally, 1979 marked the dramatic increase in apples shipped to Taiwan and Saudi Arabia. Since then, exporting and promotions have become much more organized, selective and—quite frankly—sophisticated.

As competition from third-country producers increases for export markets, our advertising and promotion efforts must increase and be even more effective.

Not only are other countries getting more involved in apple exports, but our own potential production dictates even a higher percentage of apples going to overseas markets.

The Washington State Apple Commission recognizes this and the extended five-year strategy plan indicates an increase in its overseas budget on a cumulative basis each year for the next five years.

Efforts will continue in the direction of opening new export markets while, at the same time, advertising and promotional activities in established markets will increase. This will enable the Washington apple industry to secure an ever-increasing share of the world's apple trade. ■

*The author is international promotion director, Washington State Apple Commission, Wenatchee, Wash. Tel. (509) 662-2123.*



# Despite Challenges, U.S. Remains Top Apple Supplier to Taiwan

June 1986 9

By Dawn Gyawu

Since Taiwan opened apple imports to the private trade in 1979, U.S. apples, particularly Delicious varieties, have dominated the market. U.S. command of the Taiwan apple market is likely to continue but imports from other sources pose a significant challenge.

Prior to import liberalization, over 50 percent of Taiwan's apple imports were from sources other than the United States, mainly Canada, Japan and Korea. In 1979, apple imports increased tenfold and the United States emerged as the pre-eminent supplier.

Taiwan was the top export market for U.S. apples in 1985. Exports, valued at \$13.2 million, represented 14 percent of the value of all U.S. apple exports in 1985.

According to U.S. trade statistics, exports during the first six months of the current marketing year are down 2 percent in quantity and 14 percent in value compared with the 1984/85 season, most likely in response to increased competition. Unofficial data shows a much sharper decline.

## U.S. Considered Reliable Supplier

The United States is normally considered a reliable supplier of good quality apples. Abundant U.S. supplies and regular, reliable shipping service are factors in its favor. To maintain its market share, the United States must emphasize quality and offer competitive prices.

The apple market in Taiwan has changed significantly since liberalization. Strong competition emerged among Taiwan importers and apple-exporting countries for a share of the larger Taiwan market. The result is more diversity in sources of apple supplies and the availability of relatively low-priced apples almost year-round.



In Taiwan, imports of apples and other fresh fruit are generally handled by importers or agents. The importers and agents sell to wholesalers who in turn sell to retailers at a commission.

Firms regularly engaged in importing apples numbered about a dozen in 1983/84 and have since been reduced by half due to the competition.

The importation of apples from Japan is handled by the Central Trust of China (CTC), an official purchasing agency. Although private apple trade with Japan is not allowed, CTC imports small quantities for the Lunar New Year.

## Consumers Are Quality-Conscious

Consumers in Taiwan are accustomed to year-round availability of a wide variety of fresh fruits and pay premium prices for seasonal fruits. They are increasingly quality conscious and prefer apples which are crisp, juicy, and have an excellent appearance.

Taiwan's apple imports consist mainly of Red Delicious from the United States and Canada, Golden and Starking Delicious from Chile and Fuji from Korea.

As increasing trend toward urbanization has meant changing marketing channels for food items although most fresh fruit is still sold by hawkers in small street-side stands. But there is a growing supermarket trade.

Wholesalers generally have access to cold storage facilities but once fruits leave those facilities, they most frequently remain unchilled until sold by hawkers.

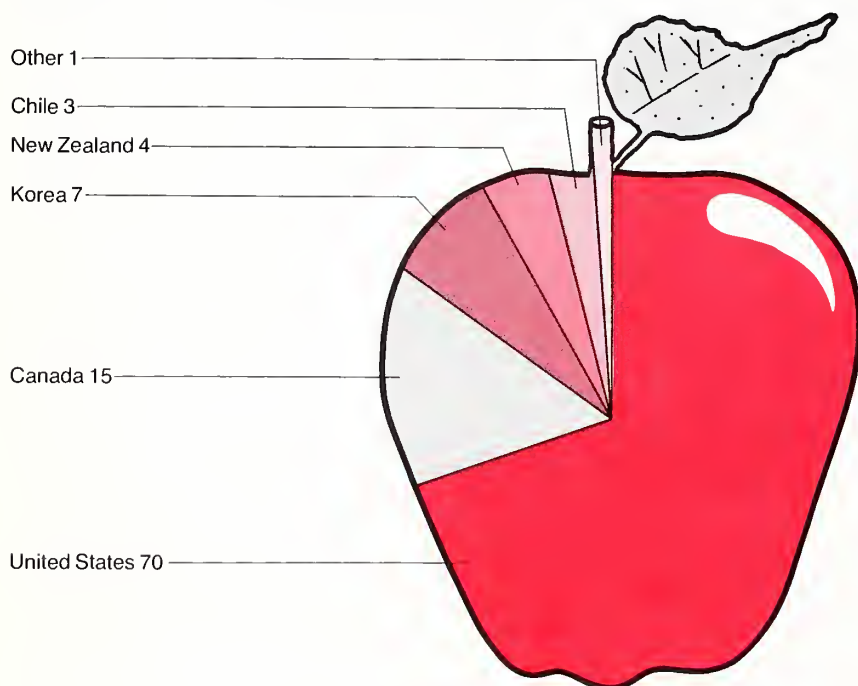
Seventy-five percent of U.S. apple exports to Taiwan are shipped during the October-February period. Canada, which enjoys a sizable market share, ships at the same time. Imports from Chile and New Zealand are brought in during March to June. They compete with U.S. and Canadian controlled-atmosphere (CA) stored apples.

## Importers Prefer Fresh Supplies

Importers indicate a preference for fresh supplies from Southern Hemisphere countries because CA-stored apples have short shelf lives and often lack crispness and juiciness, two of the qualities most desired by consumers.

## U.S. Apples Are Top Imports in Taiwan

(In percent)



The quantity of Taiwan's apple imports has varied widely in recent years. Imports peaked in 1981 at 75,436 tons, fell 33 percent in 1982, soared to 76,939 tons in 1983, then dropped 41 percent in 1984.

Changes in the method of shipping apples and in the method of assessing import duties on apples may have helped to cause variations in the quantity of apples imported in 1983 and 1984.

During the 1979/80 season, the first apple import season following liberalization, the majority of apples imported into Taiwan were in refrigerated containers. To reduce costs, importers increasingly requested that U.S. apples be shipped in dry containers.

By 1981/82, all apples imported into Taiwan from the United States were in dry containers. Shipping costs were \$2-3 lower per box and apple imports increased, but were accompanied by high rates of spoilage. This damaged the reputation of U.S. apples.

### Ban on Imports of Dry Van Apples

Taiwan officials banned imports by dry van in late 1983. By 1984, the level of imports dropped as importers adjusted to the higher costs of refrigerated shipments.

The import duty on apples is currently 65 percent ad valorem. In addition, a harbor surcharge of approximately 4 percent is levied.

Prior to February 1986, the duty was 75 percent. Also on February 1, Taiwan authorities eliminated a customs uplift charge on apple imports. Most recently, the charge was 5 percent, but had been as high as 15 percent.

In the past, importers and exporters sometimes understated the value of their apples in order to lower customs duties.

In October 1984, authorities, faced with losses of revenue, imposed a US\$10.20-deposit per 42-pound box of apples imported from the United States. The deposit requirement has since been modified so that the amount importers

must deposit is based on an estimated domestic wholesale price for differing grades and varieties.

The final tariff, assessed at a later date, is calculated on the basis of actual market prices.

### Competitors Challenge U.S. Apples

Imports of apples from Canada, Chile and New Zealand pose a significant challenge to the United States. Canada's share of Taiwan's import market is slowly increasing and was 15 percent in 1984.

The high price of U.S. apples and the uncertainty surrounding customs valuation procedures have made Canadian apples relatively more attractive. Improved quality, simple clearance through customs and, in particular, low prices are frequently cited by importers as reasons for increasing their imports of Canadian apples.

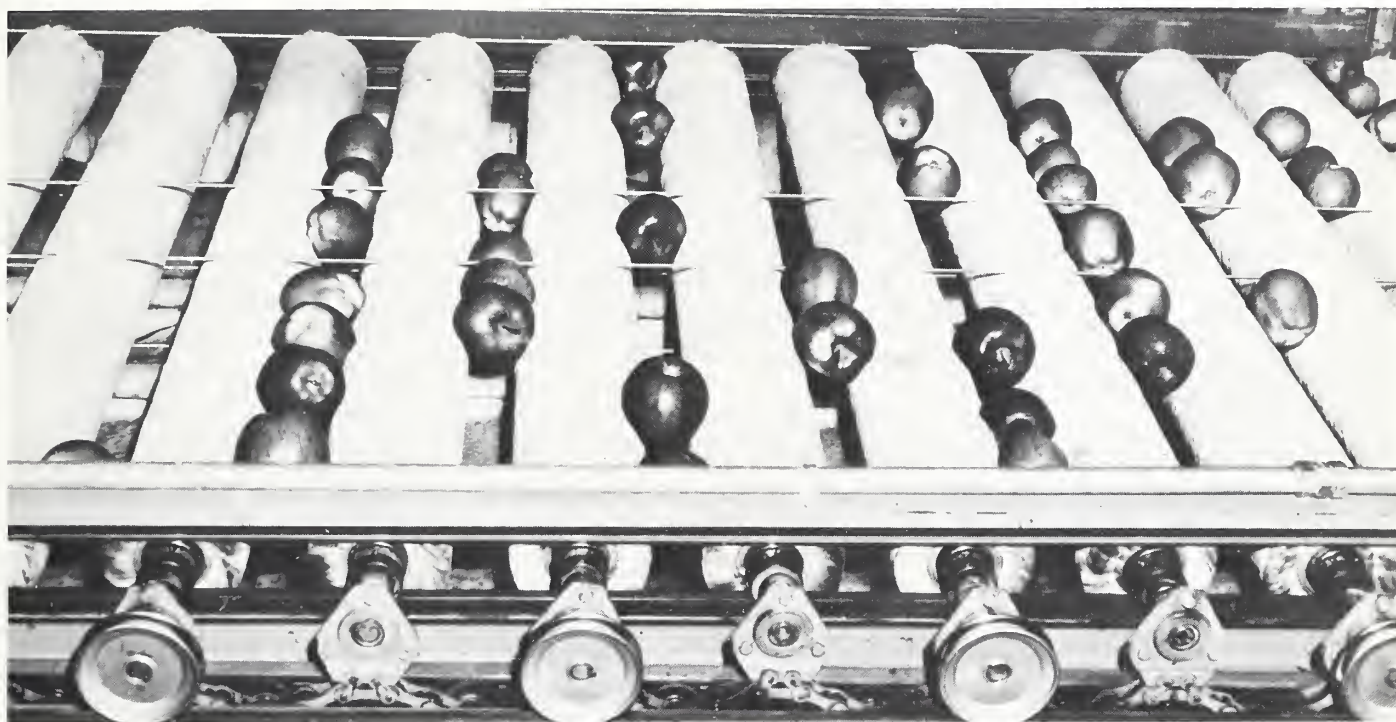
Chile and New Zealand offer low-priced apples during a period when there are no other fresh apples on the market. For both New Zealand and Chile, transportation has constrained more rapid increases in their apple exports to Taiwan.

Although transportation costs are low, services from New Zealand's ports are less frequent than from U.S. ports. New Zealand's market share in 1984 represented a 100-percent increase from 1983.

Chile's market share was only 3 percent in 1984. Its performance has been hampered by a lack of scheduled reefer service. Imports arrive by chartered vessels.

Fuji apples imported from Korea are highly prized by consumers and are more expensive than other varieties. During the 1984/85 season, the average unit value of Fuji apples from Korea was 99 cents per kilogram, compared with 40 cents for U.S. apples. These supplies serve a special sector of the market.





### Imports Supplement Smaller Domestic Supplies

In the two seasons preceding the liberalization of imports in 1979/80, domestic production accounted for two-thirds of Taiwan's total apple supplies. But today, imports supplement dwindling output of Taiwan's apples. Apple production peaked at 21,828 tons in 1979/80 and has not exceeded 15,000 tons since.

Production costs for apples are quite high. Taiwan is not ideally suited for growing apples. Only steep mountain slopes are sufficiently cool for apple cultivation and they do not lend themselves to mechanization. Labor alone accounts for about half of the total production costs for apples.

The major apple varieties grown in Taiwan are Golden Delicious, Starking Delicious and Fuji. The quality and appearance of Taiwan's apples are considered quite good due to improvements in postharvest handling. Imported apples, however, usually sell for 10 to 20 percent more than domestic apples because of their superior quality.

Apple cultivation was introduced in the mountains of Taiwan in the 1960s as part of a program to resettle retired veterans and to develop agricultural resources in the interior of the island.

Import restrictions protected the domestic apple industry from outside competition and domestic producers benefited from windfall profits due to limited supplies and high prices.

### Domestic Output Limited by Many Factors

A number of factors constrain future expansion in the domestic apple industry.

—Availability of abundant supplies of good quality imported apples at reasonable prices.

—The high cost of domestic production.

—Severe damage to the environment in the main apple-growing area prompted officials to cease encouraging the planting of apple trees.

The policy of liberalized apple imports resulted in severe downward pressure on domestic apple prices and influenced growers' planting decisions. Increasing

numbers of growers are concentrating on vegetable production, an activity in which some were already engaged as a secondary, though highly profitable sideline.

The future of the domestic apple industry in Taiwan will depend on whether remaining apple producers are willing to switch from Delicious and other U.S. varieties to higher value varieties such as Fuji.

In addition, research is under way to improve local varieties. Researchers believe that the successes achieved in developing improved varieties of local pears can be repeated for apples. ■

*The author is with the Horticultural and Tropical Products Division, FAS. Tel. (202) 382-8911.*



# Soviet Union Re-Enters U.S. Soybean Market



By Floudia Bradley

In recent months, the Soviet Union has become an aggressive buyer of U.S. soybeans. Imports of U.S. soybeans are likely to reach record levels in 1985/86.

U.S. soybean sales to the USSR during January-early April 1986 totaled a record 1.4 million metric tons, exceeding the old record of 1.2 million tons purchased in 1978/79.

Soviet purchases of U.S. soybeans for the second quarter of the marketing year alone could easily surpass the old record of total soybeans imported.

This is in sharp contrast to only last year, when U.S. exports of soybeans to the Soviet Union dropped to zero during the 1984/85 (October/September) marketing year.

## Imports Reflect Emphasis on Livestock

Heavy buying from the United States this year may be attributed to a strong commitment to maintain the domestic livestock sector, particularly poultry.

Higher output of livestock products is one of the major goals of Mikhail Gorbachev's new plan for Soviet agriculture. (See May 1986 issue of FOREIGN AGRICULTURE.)

The Soviets are determined to improve animal production efficiency and upgrade livestock feeds. To do this, they will have

to boost high protein ingredients in animal feed rations. What portion of the protein will be from soybeans and where the soybeans will be purchased remains to be seen.

## USSR Is Major Player in Oilseed Market

The USSR has emerged as a major force in the world oilseed and products market in the last decade. Soybeans are the only oilseed imported in significant amounts by the Soviet Union.

Prior to 1980, virtually all of the soybeans imported by the Soviet Union were of U.S. origin. Following the suspension of sales to the USSR in January 1980, Argentina became the largest supplier.



In recent years, Soviet soybean imports have averaged 1.2 million tons, with Argentina, the United States and Brazil alternating as the principal suppliers. Imports, however, have shown a downward trend since 1980/81, but are estimated to be on the increase in 1985/86.

The U.S. share of the Soviet soybean market increased to 43 percent in 1983/84 from 19 percent the previous year. A recovery of U.S. market share appeared on the rise, but exports in 1984/85 plunged, most likely because of bumper South American soybean crops.

## U.S.-USSR Agreement Boosted Potential

The potential for U.S. soybean sales improved in 1983 when the United States and the USSR renewed a five-year grain supply agreement for 1983-88.

Under terms of the agreement, purchases of up to 500,000 tons of soybeans and/or soybean meal could be used to reduce the minimum purchase requirement for wheat or corn.

Although the soybean and/or soybean meal clause in the agreement does not require any minimum purchase of these commodities by the Soviets, it was generally considered a positive sign that the Soviets would remain a purchaser of U.S. soybeans and possibly soybean meal.

The Soviet Union began importing soybean meal in 1979 as a means of meeting increasing protein feed usage for an expanding livestock sector.

Soviet soybean meal imports grew steadily through 1982/83, when total imports reached 2.8 million tons. Meal imports have declined sharply since that time. Brazil and the European Community are the major suppliers of soybean meal to the Soviet Union.

## A Turnaround in Soviet Feeding Plans

Feeding plans in the Soviet Union appear to have made a turnaround in recent





years. More serious attention is being given to policies providing incentives for domestically produced feed ingredients.

The Soviets are actively pursuing the expansion of a leguminous crop (field peas) because of its higher protein content. Hay, haylage, silage and high-moisture corn also are selected for increased output.

Soviet production of oilseeds, mostly sunflowerseed and cottonseed, has been stagnant for about the last 10 years. Increases in consumption of traditional protein meals have consequently been tied to imports, which have been sporadic and fluctuated dramatically from year to year.

The in-and-out nature of Soviet buying makes the task of estimating future import prospects difficult. Soviet authorities themselves admit that there is a substantial protein deficit in the livestock and poultry sector. This deficit can only have increased with recent expansion of livestock numbers in the USSR.

#### U.S. Plans Market Development Efforts

The American Soybean Association sees the Soviet protein deficit as a huge potential market for soybean farmers. To foster increased purchases of U.S. beans and meal, the Association has been providing the Soviets with technical assistance and information.

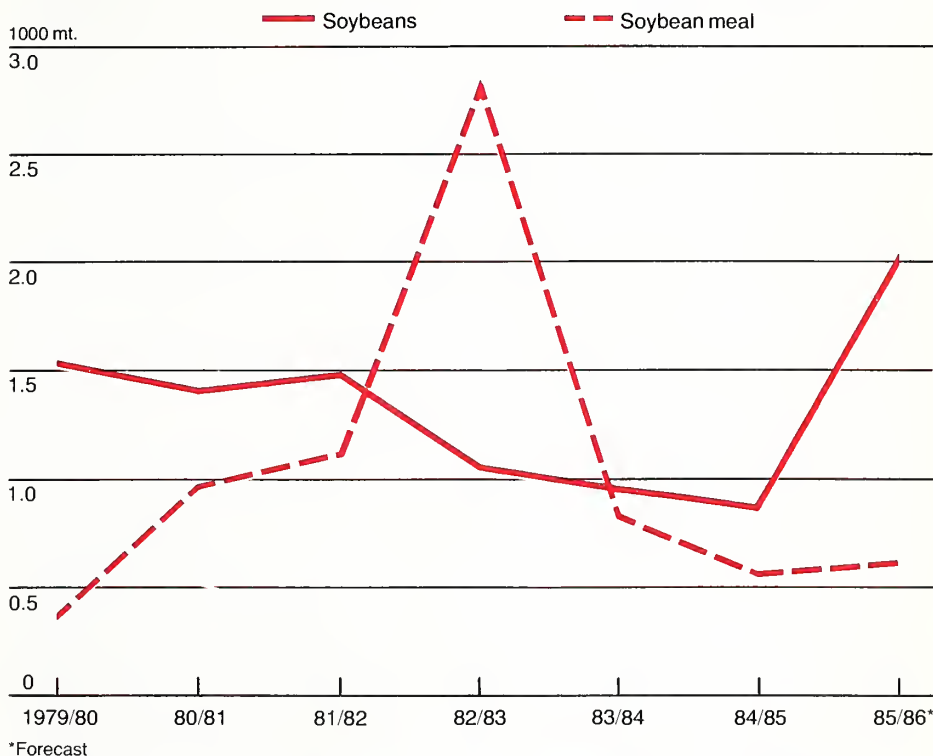
The Association participated in mixed feed seminars in April in the Soviet Union. This activity was conducted under the framework of the U.S.-USSR Agricultural Cooperator Agreement.

And preliminary plans have been made for joint cattle feeding trials featuring local feed ingredients and meal from U.S. soybeans.

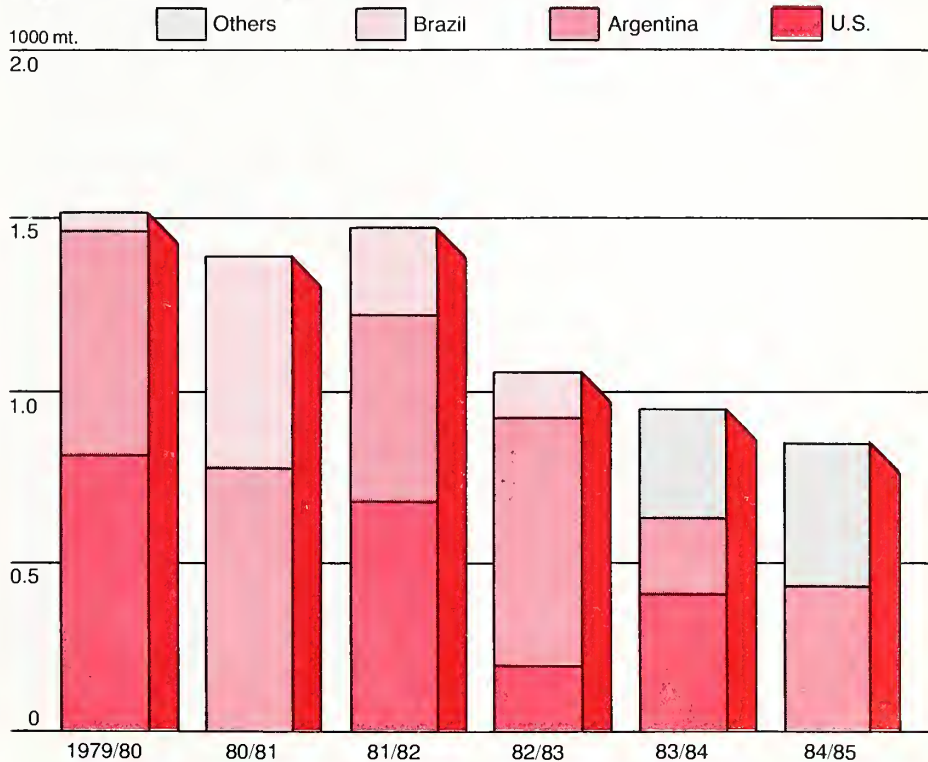
The Soviets also have shown interest in increasing the use of vegetable oil products such as margarine and mayonnaise, according to the Association. ■

*The author is with the Oilseeds and Products Division, FAS. Tel. (202) 382-8257.*

#### Soviets Are Boosting Soybean Imports



#### Competitors Have Been Taking Large Shares of Soviet Soybean Imports



## 245 Budding Jojoba Industry Gives Desert a New Look



By Frank J. Flider

Although many people have trouble pronouncing its name, jojoba (ho-ho-ba) has become much more than a curiosity. In fact, this native desert plant could be on its way to becoming an important new cash crop for the United States—and a leading contender for the jojoba oil export market as well.

Jojoba seeds contain a unique oil that offers exceptional commercial promise. Originally cultivated to replace the oil of sperm whales—which were brought to the brink of extinction as a result of heavy demand for their oil—jojoba is not only an ideal replacement but also a superior oil.

Today, the jojoba industry is looking far beyond the traditional applications of sperm oil.

Although data on the uses of jojoba is limited—mainly because it has not been commercially available in significant quantities until now—research indicates that it will have widespread uses. The oil has significant potential for a number of industries including cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and lubricants.

### Cosmetic Industry Largest Market

Cosmetic industries in the United States and Europe that are willing to pay relatively high prices for the limited supplies of jojoba oil take the lion's share.

Over 300 products containing jojoba oil have appeared in the United States alone, but the products often contain only enough of the oil to permit the use of its name on the list of ingredients. Producers of most of these products have used jojoba for its "fad" value rather than its fundamental qualities.

Unlike lanolin, mineral oil and triglycerides, jojoba oil penetrates the skin, giving it great promise as a moisturizer. Tests also have demonstrated the ability of the oil to make the skin supple and smooth.

Jojoba oil's purity, lack of odor and resistance to rancidity make it a natural base for creams and ointments. Its use could expand significantly—perhaps displacing mineral oil, lanolin and other oils—when supplies increase and prices drop.

Rudolf Schmid



Experiments show jojoba oil also is an excellent anti-foam agent in the manufacture of antibiotics. Because of its ability to penetrate the skin, jojoba oil may be suitable as a base for medicinal ointments as well. Several pharmaceutical companies are investigating this potential.

Researchers also are investigating the oil's potential as a treatment for burns, acne and psoriasis. These dermatological applications, however, require extensive study and approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and similar agencies before they can be marketed.

### **Lubricant Market Holds Potential**

Jojoba's use as a lubricant is much more certain. Tests show that the oil has tremendous potential as a lubricant additive for heavy machinery, compressors, buses, trucks, magnetic media, jet engines, defense vehicles and other equipment.

Jojoba reduces friction between moving parts of an engine. In fact, one commercially available jojoba-based engine lubricant was shown to reduce wear by 43 percent. Tests also show that the addition of as little as 3 percent jojoba oil to transmission fluids can reduce operating temperatures by 30 to 50 degrees.

Widespread use of jojoba oil in automotive lubricants could reduce petroleum consumption by millions of barrels each year.

### **Other Industrial Uses**

Jojoba has potential in several other applications including electrical insulators, transformer oils, disinfectants, detergents, fire retardants, candle wax and polishing wax for cars, floors, furniture and shoes.

Since the ban of sperm whale oil, the leather industry has been unable to find a suitable softening and tanning agent. Studies indicate that jojoba oil may be just as effective as sperm whale oil.

Jojoba oil also shows considerable promise in the textile industry. When used as a lubricant in the manufacture of synthetic fibers, studies indicate it reduces the fiber-to-metal friction by 18 percent.

### **Mexico Was Pioneer**

Until recently, most of the jojoba oil on the market came from Mexico's wild jojoba stands. Although the largest single source of jojoba, Mexico's record native harvest was only 360 tons, yielding approximately 750 drums of oil. Due to drought, Mexico's 1986 harvest is forecast at only 100 tons—the equivalent of 200 drums of oil.

Marketing of Mexico's jojoba oil has been little more than a cottage industry, with several small companies vying for the limited business available.

Additionally, wide price swings and competition between these marketers has limited the potential for large-volume users. Over the past few years, prices have ranged from \$30 to \$200 per gallon, or the equivalent of \$4 to \$28 per pound.

### **U.S. Jojoba Plantations Spring Up**

Today growers are attempting to produce this desert shrub on some 42,000 acres in the southwestern United States. Smaller plantations and trial plots are also under development in Mexico, Central and South America, Europe, Israel, Africa, Australia and India.

A commercial harvest of jojoba requires four to six years of cultivation. Most of today's plantations range in age from three to seven years.

This year a projected commercial harvest of 1,361 metric tons will make the United States the leading supplier of jojoba. Approximately two-thirds of the harvest (2,500 drums) will be marketed by the Jojoba Marketing Cooperative. The price is projected to be approximately \$40 per gallon—the equivalent of \$5.50 per pound.

Volumes are expected to double every year for the next several years. At full maturity, the current plantations will yield approximately 58 to 69 million gallons of jojoba oil.

By that time, efficient cultivation and extraction practices should result in prices ranging between \$10 and \$15 per gallon, or \$1.50 to \$2 per pound. At these prices, demand likely will outstrip supply.

Although new acreage undoubtedly will be planted, some cautious companies are already inquiring about long-term supply commitments, indicating that the demand for jojoba oil will increase in the future.

### **Japan Largest Export Market**

Japan is the largest export market for jojoba oil. In 1985, Japan imported nearly 500 drums of oil, representing about one-third of the jojoba market.

The Japanese are particularly interested in the potential of jojoba oil as an automotive lubricant additive. Since Japan is almost completely dependent on foreign petroleum, the ability to reduce this dependence is of national interest.

Europe is also a large importer of jojoba oil, taking about 200 drums in 1985. Most of the oil is used in cosmetics and, to a lesser extent, by the pharmaceuticals industry.

Minor quantities also were exported to South America, Australia and Korea last year.

### **Jojoba's Role in the Future**

Although there are many uncertainties inherent in growing and selling a new farm product, the agronomic future for jojoba looks promising.

Research in the areas of plant selection and cultural practices should help increase yields and bring down costs—two factors necessary to guarantee the widespread cultivation of jojoba and its place in domestic and world markets.

For additional information on jojoba farming, contact:

Dr. Hal C. Purcell  
Jojoba Growers' Association  
3420 East Shea Blvd.  
Suite 125  
Phoenix, AZ 85028  
Tel. (805) 595-7708. ■

*The author is executive director of JMC Technologies, Inc., a jojoba marketing cooperative in Phoenix, Ariz. Tel. (602) 996-1701.*

## U.S. Franchising Is Dynamic Sector in Overseas Business



The franchise system of distribution is a significant part of the U.S. economy and is a dynamic, growing business activity. It is increasingly accepted and respected by the public, all levels of government and by the business community.

Franchising has become a powerful force, partly because economic factors have made growth through company-owned units difficult for many businesses. By emphasizing independent ownership, franchising provides an effective method of overcoming such problems as shortages of capital, high interest rates and finding and hiring competent employees.

Franchising sales of goods and services in more than 478,000 outlets are expected to reach \$576 billion in 1986, about 9 percent higher than a year earlier and about 72 percent over the level of sales at the start of the 1980s.



Movement by franchisors to foreign markets continues to grow at a rapid rate and in 1984 there were 328 U.S. franchisors with over 27,000 outlets located in most countries of the world.

### Franchising Offers Good Growth Potential

It is the marketing sector which today offers the greatest opportunities for entry and growth of new business. Franchising is one of the most creative of the various marketing techniques which have emerged in this century.

Today, the key to a successful franchise operation is a strong system. It is the system that provides the appearance that:

- all outlets belong to a chain;
- all franchises can follow;
- provides the know-how to franchisees to keep one step ahead of the competition; and
- will continue to provide abundant opportunities to all that want to fulfill the dream of owning one's own business.

### Product and Trade Name Franchising

Product and trade name franchising began in the United States as an independent





sales relationship between supplier and dealer in which the dealer acquired some of the identity of the supplier.

Franchised dealers concentrate on one company's product line and to some extent identify their business with that company.

Typical of this segment are automobile and truck dealers, gasoline service stations and soft drink bottlers. Today, they dominate the franchise field, accounting for an estimated 74 percent of all franchise sales for 1986.

Total sales by product and trade name franchisors are expected to reach an estimated \$425 billion in 1986, compared with \$396 billion in 1985. Since 1972, the establishment of product and trade name franchisors declined at a rapid rate. The attrition rate is expected to slow in the next few years.

### **Business Format Franchising**

Business format franchising is characterized by an ongoing business relationship between franchisor and

franchisee that includes not only the product, service and trademark, but the entire business format itself. This includes a marketing strategy and plan, operating manuals and standards, quality control and continuing two-way communications.

Restaurants, retailing, personal and business services and rental and real estate services fall into the category of business format franchising.

Business format franchising has been responsible for much of the growth of franchising in the United States since 1950 and will continue to offer opportunities for those individuals seeking their own business.

### **Franchising Is a Growing Trend**

Franchising will continue to widen its scope to include a variety of service industries including a broad range of computerized services, professional services and other areas geared to the needs of small- and medium-sized businesses.

More franchising is also expected in areas that specialize in health and fitness

programs and in maid services. Other areas that show growth potential are temporary help services, ice cream outlets, video equipment sales and the automotive aftermarket.

Food retailers will continue to seek more efficient ways of appealing to the segmented food market. They will also attempt to obtain a larger share of the consumer's budget than is normally spent in restaurants. In addition, food retailers will compete fiercely among themselves for market share.

The trend of acquisitions of franchising companies is persisting, indicating that franchising is an integral and established method of conducting a profitable business. Rising costs and the proliferation of government franchise regulations have been cited as contributing factors in the increased use of the acquisition route as a means of expanding the franchising form of distribution.



### Franchising Moves Overseas

U.S. franchisors are currently operating in most major countries or are engaged in serious negotiations about entering foreign markets. This indicates foreign nations have welcomed the entry of U.S. franchisors and that local laws and regulations have not been overly restrictive.

Franchising operations in foreign markets, however, involve many of the same problems confronting other business ventures. Language difficulties, differences in customs and sometimes unpredictable government decisionmaking are examples of impediments all U.S. franchisors encounter in other countries.

### Problems Are Less Formidable

Compared to other service sectors, the problems of franchise companies in international transactions are relatively less formidable.

Franchisors must comply with the same local requirements as domestic businesses and the franchise agreements must comply with local contract law, antitrust law and trademark licensing laws.

There are no real trade barriers that discriminate specifically against U.S. franchisors. There are no specific

regulations restricting franchise operations and no prohibitive laws governing franchising that differ from those which affect other types of business operations.

The population in many foreign countries is young and likes to try new products and concepts. In addition, more and more women everywhere are going to work.

This not only increases the family's disposable income, which is good for franchisors in the service and consumer products business, but it also reduces the amount of time spent in the kitchen and increases the demand for food purchased away from home.

Foreign developed countries are increasingly exhibiting the same attributes which fostered the surge of service industries in the United States. These include rising disposable personal income, growing demand for consumer goods and services, expanding urbanization and high consumer mobility.

A Department of Commerce survey reveals that 328 U.S. franchising companies operated 27,021 outlets in foreign countries in 1984; this compares with 305 franchisors with 25,682 outlets in 1983. Furthermore, an additional 137 companies have indicated that they are considering extending their U.S. operations to foreign countries by the end of 1987.

### Small Firms Show Keen Interest

This interest has been expressed mostly by small- and medium-sized franchisors, marketing a variety of services and products. Of the companies seeking foreign markets, 32 are franchisors of business aids and services and 30 are restaurant franchisors.

The form of entry into foreign markets varies considerably, with many firms using more than one method in conducting foreign operations.

Of the 328 franchisors doing business in foreign countries in 1984, 307 sold their outlets to franchisees—either directly or through a master licensee who received the right to develop the franchisor's system in a specific country or region, 38 operated joint ventures; and 32 had some company-operated units.

Twenty-five of these companies derived 10 percent or more of their income from foreign operations, 31 firms received between 5 and 9 percent, 104 between 1 and 4 percent, and 168 received less than 1 percent.

### Canada Is Top Market for U.S. Franchisors

Canada continues to be the dominant market for U.S. franchisors despite its declining share of U.S. foreign outlets. In 1984, 30 percent of all U.S. foreign franchised outlets were located in Canada, down from a high of 46 percent in 1971.

Japan continues to be the second largest market for U.S. franchisors, 72 percent of which represent various food categories such as restaurants, donut shops, ice cream stores and convenience food stores.

The United Kingdom ranks third, with 2,456 outlets, while 4,427 outlets are located in all of continental Europe. ■

*This article has been excerpted and adapted from the March 3, 1986, edition of Business America.*



In many countries around the world, consumers are becoming more health and nutrition conscious. The Japanese are no exception.

The health food market in Japan has grown enormously over the past two decades. Most recently, its principal thrust has shifted from traditional health foods to dietary supplements.

Export opportunities exist for U.S. health food suppliers willing to meet Japan's rather stringent import requirements and to tailor their products for Japanese tastes.

## Profile of Japanese Health Food Sector

The Japanese health food industry, in existence for over 20 years, has been sustained by the country's vigorous economic growth which has induced people to seek a higher quality lifestyle.

Japan's aging population is another factor in the growing sales of health foods. By the year 2000, it is projected that about one of six Japanese will be 65 years or older.

Prior to the advent of the modern health food industry in Japan, traditional health foods, such as natural foods, folk remedies and "Kampoyaku" (Chinese herbal medicines) dominated.

Around 1965, Japanese health foods, manufactured mainly by small- and medium-size firms, emerged as a separate entity from the food or pharmaceutical markets.

## Double-Digit Growth

During the 1970s, Japan's health food market grew annually at a double-digit pace, bolstered by the rising national concern about health. The boon really began when Japanese food manufacturers introduced Vitamin E, nutritional beverages, soybean milk (tonyu) and similar products to the market.

Over the past decade, the health food market expanded about 12 percent per year and is projected to grow 5-15 percent annually through the remainder of the 1980s.

Although no statistical data on the Japanese health food market have been compiled, the All Japan Health and Natural Foods Association and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has estimated the market at roughly \$1.7 billion.

Imported products are said to represent about 10 percent of Japan's health food market. Thus, the import market is worth about \$170 million.

## No Consensus Definition Of Health Food in Japan

There currently is no consensus in Japan of what constitutes a health food. Each organization, whether a government agency, a trade association or a private firm has its own special definition.

Although concepts of a health food may vary, they fall roughly into three basic groups.

—"Kampoyaku" and Japanese folk remedy products which have long been believed to have certain medicinal qualities—for example, ginseng, herbal teas and extract of turtle. Nutritional supplements like certain vitamins and wheat germ oil are also in this group.

—General foods such as health drinks and soybean milk and dietetic foods like vitamin-enriched rice.

—Natural foods such as tofu, honey, brown rice and low-sodium, low-fat products.

## Two Distribution Channels

Health foods are sold in Japan through two distribution channels—wholesale/retail outlets and direct sales by manufacturers. The direct sales system is more important, accounting for over half of all domestic shipments.

While potential exists for exports of U.S. health foods to the Japanese market, there are several areas in importing health foods for the Japanese market that exporters need to be aware of:

**Ingredients and Additives** There is no barrier to importing so long as the use of ingredients and additives in certain health

健康食品

foods is permitted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MHW) under the Food Sanitation Law.

U.S. health food producers tend, however, to use colorings, artificial flavors, preservatives and sugar substitutes, such as saccharin. Their use is restricted in Japan.

**Foods vs Drugs** Because the MHW does not have a firm definition of a "health food," imported health food products are classified either as a drug or as a food.

Once an imported health food is classified as an over-the-counter drug under the Pharmaceutical Affairs Law, a license is required for its import. Each food must be registered with the MHW. And the additives used must be among those already approved by this regulatory agency.

All applications for registration must be supplemented by clinical data obtained in Japan.

**Import Duties** Health foods are not specially classified in Japan's tariff schedule. Therefore, they are treated the same as foods not categorized as health foods.

**Government Regulations** There are no special government regulations which either encourage or discourage the importation of health foods.

### Major Constraints Remain To Be Solved

Product development to suit the needs of Japanese importers and consumers seems to be the first move to be made by American manufacturers and exporters. The specific needs are:

- Taste, flavor and packaging should suit Japanese consumers.
- Smaller portions should be packaged so they are more affordable.
- Order lot sizes should be smaller so the insurance risks for Japanese importers will be reduced. And,
- Shipment from seaports rather than from inland factories should be arranged for the convenience of Japanese importers.

### Two Views on U.S. Health Foods

There have been both positive and negative comments on American health foods in Japan. Some positive remarks include:

—Some American health food products are unique and have attractive tastes. Examples are pure apple cider, carrot chips and dried fruit chips.

—The quality of U.S. and European products exceeds those of developing countries.

—Japanese consumers in general have formed a favorable impression of American or European food products vis-a-vis those from developing countries.

But on the negative side were these comments:

—American health food products are unfamiliar to most Japanese other than importers.

—Prices tend to be high.

### Distribution Is Weak Link

The distribution network for imported health foods in Japan is relatively weak, compared to the one servicing Japanese suppliers.

In general, importers lag far behind the leading domestic producers when it comes to financing, advertising budget, marketing capabilities and distribution coverage.

Therefore, one way U.S. health food suppliers may crack the Japanese market is through direct export to major domestic manufacturers or key department stores in Tokyo and Osaka.

Setting up a marketing organization in Japan appears to be the most effective way of entering the market providing the U.S. products appear extremely promising and the U.S. manufacturers concerned can afford the direct investment required.

### Successful Cases of American Products In Japan

Although the imported health food market in Japan is relatively small and U.S.

products are not well known, there are some products drawing special attention in the Japanese market.

These products are either strongly backed by U.S. door-to-door sales companies operating their own branch offices in Japan or by Japanese department stores.

Prior to importing, one of these door-to-door firms not only obtained clearance from Japanese authorities to import ingredients and additives but also conducted tests to identify the wants and needs of Japanese consumers in terms of taste and flavor.

Another U.S. firm imported its products in bulk and packaged them in Japan to reduce the cost of goods.

These successes of U.S. health food products suggest that it is possible to capture some niche in the Japanese market as long as the products have strong promotional support and a proper distribution channel. And this market should expand as a growing industry in a long run.

For more information on the Japanese health food market, contact the following trade associations:

All Japan Health and Natural Foods Association

Ichigaya-Tamachi 11-19  
Shinjuku-Ku, Tokyo

Japan Health Foods Study Association

Ichigaya-Tamachi 1-19  
Shinjuku-Ku, Tokyo

Japan Diet Food Association

Toranomon 34 Mori Bldg  
7F, Toranomon 1-25-5  
Minato-Ku, Tokyo

The Pharmaceutical and Health Food Industry Council

Zria Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.  
Nihonbashi Kobunecho,  
10-11, Chou-Ku, Tokyo ■

*This article is based on a study done by SRI International in Tokyo for the Office of the U.S. Agricultural Counselor there.*



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**France**  
**Agricultural Exports**  
**Hit New High**

French agricultural exports increased more than 6 percent in 1985 to a record-high of roughly \$17.2 billion. France's agricultural trade surplus was also a record at about \$3.8 billion, up 15 percent from the year before.

France is the world's second largest agricultural exporting country after the United States. About 17 percent of total French exports are from the agricultural sector. To maintain its export position, France carries out an aggressive program of market promotion and market information. These two activities are split between SOPEXA, the group for the expansion of sales of food and agricultural products, and CFCE, the French center for foreign trade, which is the information and statistical group. A number of separate commodity offices also contribute to export expansion by carrying out technical research and economic and marketing studies, often in collaboration with SOPEXA or CFCE.—Ernest Koenig, Agricultural Counselor, Paris.

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**Kenya**  
**Strong Gains Made From**  
**Coffee Price Boom**

Kenya's economy is benefiting from the latest surge in coffee prices, following drought damage to Brazil's coffee crop. With a large crop of about 130,000 metric tons coming on and large stocks, Kenya is one of the few countries readily able to increase exports of high-quality coffee. Kenyan coffee exports are expected to reach a record 120,000 tons or more this year, and could approach the record 1977 export earnings of nearly \$500 million.

In 1986, coffee and tea are forecast to account for nearly three-fifths of Kenya's total exports. However, Kenya runs some risk in being so highly dependent on coffee and tea for its export earnings. In the future, beverage prices could be less favorable. Suspension of the International Coffee Organization (ICO) export quotas adds more uncertainty, but so far the Kenyan economy has realized large benefits from beverage exports.

During the last coffee boom year of 1977, real gross domestic product in Kenya jumped 9.5 percent and from 1976 through 1985 it grew by 45 percent. Many smallholders are involved in tea and coffee production and these earnings are widely distributed. The transportation and trading sectors have also benefited. In 1977 particularly, these sectors earned much from handling Uganda's coffee as well as that produced in Kenya. The government also reaps large financial gains from increased tax receipts, and a forecast budget deficit may turn out to be a surplus this year.

In 1985, coffee, valued at \$40 million, accounted for 60 percent of the total U.S. agricultural imports from Kenya. Tea, at \$13 million, was next. This year's U.S. coffee imports from Kenya are expected to rise in value to an estimated \$46 million.—L.A. Witucki, Economic Research Service. Tel. (202) 786-1680.

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**Saudi Arabia**  
**Livestock and Poultry**  
**Industries Make Big Gains**

Saudi Arabia's push for self-sufficiency is getting good marks in the poultry sector. Increases in production, aided by generous domestic subsidies and protected by tariffs, have helped Saudi producers surpass the government goal for shell eggs and attain more than three-quarters of self-sufficiency in poultry meat.

The development of the industry has not been without problems, however. The ease of entering the field brought in many less-competent producers and, as egg production reached the saturation point, some have dropped out. The losers faced numerous problems long solved in countries with more experience: marketing, production control, feed formulation and use of spent hens.

The broiler sector is still growing but it, too, has problems. The Saudi preference for live birds has complicated marketing. Problems with feed formulation affect this sector as well.

In the dairy sector, there is still a way to go to reach self-sufficiency, although significant progress is being made. Notable improvements have been made in marketing. The national dairy herd continues to increase, both through increases in existing herds and establishment of new ones. The main problem dairies face would seem to be climate (in some areas) and feed formulation.

Sheep dominate the livestock sector and dozens of licenses for sheep-feeding operations have been issued in the past year. Local beef production is still almost insignificant with dairy culls and bull calves probably providing most of the locally produced beef. Despite the fact that Saudis

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are mutton eaters, there is an increasing interest in beef feedlots, one even for beef-breed cattle, and several new lots may begin operations within the next year. Feed formulation will probably be a problem for the livestock sector as well as for poultry.—Jerome M. Kuhl, Agricultural Trade Officer, Jeddah.

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## **United States**

### **Consumers To Pay Higher Pepper Prices**

Tight world stocks of pepper have already been reflected in the near doubling of prices over the past year. New York spot prices in late March were being quoted at around \$2.42 per pound, compared with \$1.30 a year earlier. Pepper is the world's most important spice and is found in almost all U.S. households and restaurants.

World pepper consumption has outstripped production during the past several years, resulting in a stock drawdown. Bad weather last year greatly reduced output in several key producing nations—and stocks are now at extremely low levels. Unfavorable growing conditions in Indonesia reduced production, while India's crop was also significantly lower. The remaining two large pepper producers—Brazil and Malaysia—also suffered production cuts. Malaysian farmers have been shifting to more profitable crops such as cocoa, while Brazilian growers have neglected to make new plantings and have reduced cultural practices because of credit shortages and high production costs.

Supplies are expected to remain tight and prices could stay high for some time since it takes three to four years for new plantings to come into production. However, some relief could come from the bumper 1986 crop being harvested in India.—Rex Dull, Horticultural and Tropical Products Division, FAS. Telephone (202) 447-2974.

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## **Nigeria**

### **Agricultural Imports To Decline Sharply**

Nigeria's imports of food and agricultural raw materials are expected to fall to around \$1 billion in 1986, largely because the government has delayed issuing import licenses in the face of declining oil revenues. U.S. agricultural exports to Nigeria may fall by about 25 percent.

The government's effort to conserve foreign exchange by cutting agricultural imports has been aided by the excellent 1985 harvest. However, because of lack of proper storage facilities, supplies left from last fall will begin to deteriorate when the rainy season arrives.

While in past years the bulk of adjustment in agricultural imports has come (except for rice) at the expense of other exporters, the United States can expect its food shipments to be hit by the current cutback. The delay in issuing import licenses for wheat may trim U.S. wheat exports by about one-quarter from last year's record 325 million tons. Even if mills eventually receive licenses in the neighborhood of last season's levels, they will face difficulties in importing and milling the 1985 total of 1.85 million tons of wheat. Further, U.S. qualities are under increasing pressure from Argentine and Canadian wheats which became considerably cheaper in 1985.—Christopher T. Goldthwait, former Agricultural Attache, Lagos.

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## **Indonesia**

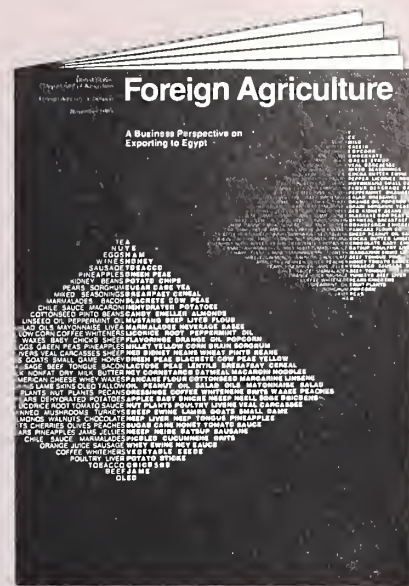
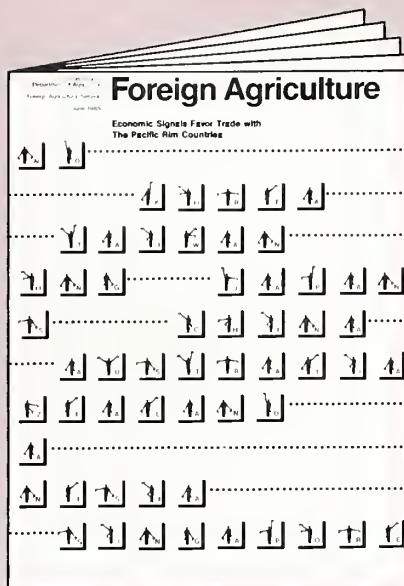
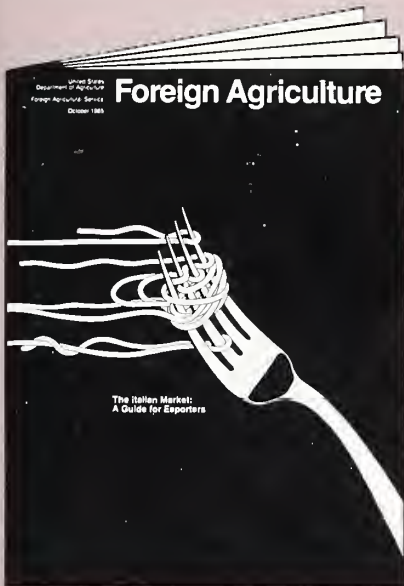
### **Central Buying Agency Created for Cotton**

The Indonesian government has created a central buying company responsible for purchasing and distributing all domestic and imported cotton and fiber for use in the Indonesian textile industry. Each cotton user will continue to negotiate and contract with foreign suppliers for their individual cotton and fiber needs. However, the letter of credit must be opened by the central buying company. In addition to handling all imports, the central group will be responsible for purchasing all domestically produced cotton and allocating it to the various end users. Local mills are required to purchase domestic cotton equal to 10 percent of their imports.

The creation of a central buying agency is an obvious followup to an earlier government decree that mandated that one ton of domestic cotton must be purchased before 10 tons of foreign cotton could be imported. Indonesian textile interests objected to the earlier decree, citing the fact that domestic cotton production could only satisfy 5 percent of the industry's cotton needs instead of the 10 percent implied by the 1 to 10 ratio. The creation of the central buying company seems to insure that all domestic cotton will be purchased and that each end-user will be able to obtain a sufficient supply of cotton and fiber.—Robert M. McConnell, Agricultural Counselor, Jakarta.

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